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ARE YOU TRAINING YOUR CHILD TO BE HAPPY?

5573.14

Lesson Material in Child Management



Publication No. 202

United States Department of Labor
Children's Bureau

1930

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

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CHILDREN'S BUREAU

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UNITED STATES
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON : 1930

U. S. SUPERINTENDENT OF DOCUMENTS

SEP 27 1930

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This series of 12 lessons was prepared from
a manuscript by Blanche C. Weill, Ed. D.,
formerly psychologist with Dr. D. A. Thom,
director of the habit clinics of Boston, who
has approved the lessons.

ARE YOU TRAINING YOUR CHILD TO BE HAPPY?

DO YOU HAVE A HAPPY BABY?

Does he laugh and coo while you work?
Does he play quietly by himself while you work?
Does your little child like the food you give him?
Is he ready and willing to go to bed at bedtime?
Does he love the new baby?
Does he play happily with other children?
Then he is happy and good.

Does your baby cry all day?
Does he get mad and kick and scream?
Does your little child spit out the food he does not like?
Does he beg you not to put him to bed?
Does he tease the new baby?
Of course, you do not want these things.

We can help you to make your baby happy, but you must help, too.

You must try very hard.

You must never stop trying.

You are tired and busy some day. Your baby is crying. You say, "This one time does not matter. I will pick him up. Then he will stop crying."

Then your smart little baby says to himself, "Hurrah, I was the boss that time! I can be boss next time."

Before you know it, he will cry again. Will you pick him up again?

Do you always give him what he wants?

Then he will not be happy long.

Read this little book. It will help you to keep your baby happy and good.

Lesson No. 1.—HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR CHILD TO FORM GOOD HABITS?

Do you want your child to form good habits?

The first time you do something new it is hard.

Next time it is easier.

Next time it is very easy.

Soon you can do it and not think about it at all.

Then we call it a *habit*.

You have learned everything that way.

You learned to feed yourself that way when you were little.

You learned to dress yourself that way.

You have the *habit* of dressing yourself.

You have the *habit* of feeding yourself.

Your child is learning everything that way.

He is *forming habits*.

He can learn a *good* way to do things.

But he can learn a *bad* way instead.

He learns the way *you* teach him.

Do you want to teach him the good way or the bad way?

Do you want him to form good habits or bad habits?

This lesson will tell you how to teach him good habits.

Begin when he is born.

Feed him at exactly the same hours every day.

Do not feed him at any other time.

Let him sleep after every feeding.

Do not feed him just because he cries.

Let him wait until the right time.

If you make him wait, his stomach will learn to wait.

His mind will learn that he can not get things by crying.

You do two things for your baby at the same time. You teach his body good habits and you teach his mind good habits.

You can teach him not to be a cross baby, too.

When he cries, do not pick him up to stop his crying.

See that no pin hurts him.

See that he is warm and dry.

Turn him over.

Then let him alone.

In that way you teach him not to fuss and cry. If mothers pick up their babies when they cry, the babies learn to cry for things. The mothers teach them to cry for things.

Pick up the baby when he is awake and not crying.

Play with him or talk to him quietly.

In a little while put him down again.

Do this at the same hours every day.

This will show him that he will get attention when he does not cry.

He will learn to wait for the right time.

This saves you time for your work and it is good for your baby.

Do not let other people pick the baby up or talk to him too much.

A little baby should be quiet most of the time.

Always keep regular hours for food and baths and sleep.

All babies are not alike.

Some babies must eat every four hours. Some must eat every three hours.

Your own doctor or the doctor at the clinic will give you a plan for your baby.

The plan will tell you at what time your baby should sleep each day.

It will also tell you how much food to give him and at what time to feed him.

The doctor will also tell you how to change the plan as your baby grows older.

Start your baby with good habits. Then the bad ones will not form easily.

Write to the Children's Bureau at Washington, D. C., asking for Infant Care and The Baby's Daily Time Cards. These are free. They will help you to teach your baby good habits.

MRS. GUERRA AND HER TWO BABIES

Mrs. Guerra had her first baby at home.

A neighbor came in to help her.

The doctor told her to feed the baby every four hours.

The baby cried.

Mrs. Guerra and her friend said, "The baby is hungry; we must feed him."

The baby cried soon again. Mrs. Guerra fed him again.

She fed him many times.

Soon the baby got sick and cross.

His stomach was tired of working.

The mother said, "What is the matter with my baby?"

The baby cried all the time.

Mrs. Guerra had her second baby at the hospital.

The nurses took care of him.

They fed him every four hours.

They bathed him at the same time every day.

They kept him clean and comfortable.

They did not pick him up when he cried.

They knew that babies get exercise when they cry. Babies need exercise.

This baby was well and happy.

The nurses said to Mrs. Guerra, "When you go home, do as we do. Then your baby will be well and happy and good."

Mrs. Guerra went home in two weeks. She did what the nurses told her.

The baby was always good and happy. He was always well.

She said: "I made a mistake before. The nurses are right. Now, I will see what I can do with my big baby to keep him well, too."

PROBLEMS

1. Did the doctor tell you to feed the baby every three hours or every four hours?
2. Do you look at the clock before you feed the baby?
3. If the baby is crying at 8 o'clock and his feeding time does not come until 9, what do you do?
4. When do you play with your baby?

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Lesson No. 2.—DOES YOUR CHILD HAVE GOOD FOOD HABITS?

Does your little boy eat the things you give him?

Or does he say, "I don't like milk" or "I won't eat vegetables"?

A child likes to do what his parents do. He likes to say what they say.

Has he seen father leave spinach on his plate?

Then he, too, will not eat spinach.

Has he heard mother say, "I don't like oatmeal"?

He, too, will say, "I don't like oatmeal."

These are bad food habits.

You began them without knowing it.

You can stop them.

It is easy to start good food habits when a child is little.

It is hard to break bad ones when he is big.

Prepare food that is good for children.

The doctor will tell you what are good foods for children.

The Children's Bureau in Washington, D. C., will send you directions for feeding your children if you write and ask for them.

Stomachs form habits like people.

A hungry stomach makes a cross child.

A stomach that has too much food makes a cross child, too.

Feed your child at the same hours every day.

See that his little hands are clean before he eats.

Make the table look pretty.

Call the children to the table.

See that they sit down quietly.

Serve each child a little of each food.

Eat some of everything yourself.

Show that you like everything.

Never say, "I do not like this."

Never ask your child or anyone else, "Do you like this?"

Before you ask this, perhaps a plate of food makes him think, "I'm hungry; I want to eat."

He does not think anything about *like* or *not like*. He only thinks, "Food—hungry—eat."

After you ask this you make him think something new. "Perhaps I *don't* like it. No; I don't. I won't eat it."

He does not think any more, "Food—hungry—eat." He thinks, "Food—like or not like—eat or not eat."

Then the bad food habit begins.

This is why we must never ask anyone, "Do you like this?"

If the child says he does not like it, pay no attention.

Do not talk about food at all.

If he does not eat, pay no attention. Let him go off without eating.

It will not hurt him to miss a meal. It will not hurt him to miss two meals.

Do not give him *anything* to eat until the next meal.

If he does not eat at the next meal, pay no attention.

It will not hurt him to miss three meals. Do not be afraid. Soon he will be hungry.

Then he will eat what you give him.

Watch your child if he does not want *any food*. He may be getting sick.

Does your child make you feed him?

This is a bad food habit. Perhaps you began it this way:

Perhaps you fed him even after he was 2 years old. It was quicker for you. It is hard to teach a baby to feed himself. It takes much time.

Now he is 3 years old. It takes too much time to feed him. It is bad for you. It is bad for him, too. He has not learned to be independent. He must learn now.

Let your 1-year-old baby try to feed himself.

He will spill some at first. Let him.

He will soon learn. Then he will be happy and good.

Are you afraid your child will not eat enough?

You beg him to eat. You promise him something nice if he will eat.

He likes that. He says to himself, "I will not eat. If I cry or fuss, by and by I will get something nice."

So he will never eat until you promise him something.

He learned this. You were his teacher.

Do you give your child food that is not good for children?

You have made him sick.

A sick baby will not eat. A sick baby is cross.

Do you give your child too much food at one time?

Stomachs must not work too hard.

Do you try to make him eat when he is too tired or angry to be hungry?

Food will not digest then.

Remember that people digest food well when they are happy and quiet.

Try to make every meal a happy, quiet time.

•
TOMMY AND HIS SUMMER CAMP

Tommy was very happy. He had come to the summer camp. He liked the boys; he liked the long automobile ride; he liked the director; and he liked the camp in the big trees near the river.

Then came dinner. The boys sat on benches at long tables. First came soup. Tommy said, "I don't like soup."

No one paid attention.

Then came stew, with meat, potatoes, onions, and carrots. Tommy said, "I don't like stew. Please give me some chops."

The director said, "That's too bad. To-night we have stew."

All the other boys ate their stew. Tommy ate nothing. No one paid attention. Tommy said, "I want to go home. My mother gives me what I like." He went to bed and cried.

For breakfast they had corn-meal mush and cocoa. Tommy did not like corn meal nor cocoa. He wanted coffee. Again he did not eat. No one paid attention. Tommy was very hungry and unhappy.

For lunch they had vegetable salad and rice. Tommy never ate vegetables at home, but he was very hungry. He forgot he did not like vegetables. He ate everything on his plate.

After that he ate everything that came on the table and was very happy at camp.

PROBLEMS

1. When Johnny does not want to eat his luncheon, what do you do?
2. If Mary says she does not like carrots, how do you teach her to eat them?
3. Do you make the table more attractive and eating more pleasant for the children by sometimes buying pretty dishes at the 10-cent store especially for them?
4. How can you arrange your work so as to allow your child time enough to feed himself?
5. How do you teach your child to feed himself?
6. What have you done to make mealtime in your home a quiet, happy time? Are there other things you can do to make it even happier?

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Lesson No. 3.—HOW DOES YOUR CHILD GET YOUR ATTENTION?

Children want attention very much.

They will do anything to get attention.

Sometimes they do something bad to get attention.

They are punished. That hurts. But they do not like to get no attention at all.

It is worth the hurt to get attention.

That seems queer, but it is true.

Many children do naughty things and run so that some one will run after them. They are the center of attention then.

There is another way to be the center of attention.

It is to do nice things.

Then people like us.

We grown-ups want people to like us. We want people to like the things we do. We want them to show us that they like those things.

Children are just the same as we are.

We must remember to show them we are pleased when they do nice things.

Show them you are glad when they try to feed themselves and when they try to dress themselves. Perhaps they do not do it well. That does not matter.

Show them you are glad when they try to help you set the table, or sweep, or put things away.

Show them you are glad when they do quickly what you tell them.

If the children see that they can get attention by being good, they will be good.

And they will be busy and happy, too.

DOES YOUR CHILD HAVE TANTRUMS?

Does your child kick and scream if you do not let him do what he wants? We call this a tantrum.

Perhaps he has tantrums because he does not get enough sleep.

Perhaps he does not get enough play.

Children need much sleep and much play.

Perhaps your child has enough sleep and enough play, and still he has tantrums.

Perhaps you talk loud and get angry. Then your child does what you do.

Perhaps you will not let him do things for himself. Children want to be independent. If you will not let them do things for themselves, strong children will kick and scream. You are making them naughty when you do not let them try to do things alone. Remember it does not matter if they do not do as well as you. They will learn after a while.

When your child kicks and screams, do you let him do what he wants so that he will be quiet?

If you do, he thinks, "When I scream, I get what I want. I will always scream."

A baby is never too young to learn this. Babies 2 weeks old learn it.

If the child sees that you pay no attention when he kicks and screams or whines he will think, "That is no good. I will stop and try something else."

He will always stop if he gets no attention.

Sometimes it takes a long, long time to make him believe that you will not pay attention.

But keep on with what you are doing. Act as if nobody were in the room. In the end the child will stop.

Next time he will try it again, but he will stop sooner. After a while, if you never pay attention to the tantrums, he will lose the bad habit.

It all depends on you and on the people who live around you. Children learn from what they see and hear around them.

WHEN MOLLY HAD A TANTRUM

Molly was a happy little girl. She had so many nice things to do. Sometimes she asked her mother for something, and her mother said "No." Then she played with something else.

One day new neighbors came to live next door. They had a little girl just as old as Molly. But she was not a happy little girl. She cried and screamed until she got what she wanted.

Molly could hear her. She could hear the mother say, "Yes, yes; only stop that noise!"

Molly thought, "That is the way to get things. I will do that, too." She said to her mother, "Please give me some candy."

Mother said, "You may have some after supper."

Molly began to cry. "But I want it *now!*" she said.

"Not till supper," said mother.

Then Molly started to kick and scream the way the other little girl did. But mother did not say, "Yes, yes; only stop that noise!" She picked Molly up, put her into her room, and said, "Stay here till you are a nice girl." Then she went out and closed the door.

Molly thought, "That is not a good way to get things. I won't try it any more." She stopped crying.

Mother came and smiled at her. Molly smiled back.

They both were very happy.

PROBLEMS

1. What do you do or say when your child acts naughty before company? Why does your child act naughty before company?
2. When your child tries to wash his hands and face to surprise you, and dirties a nice, clean towel, how do you show him that you are glad he tried to please you?
3. What do you do if your child whines or cries when you are getting ready to leave him for a few hours?
4. Do you let your little baby get what he wants by crying? What do you do when he cries hard to be picked up?
5. Do you stay with your baby or your little child when you put him to bed at night? What should you do?
6. How often does your child have a temper tantrum? How do you manage it? What should you do?

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Lesson No. 4.—DOES YOUR CHILD ALWAYS OBEY YOU?

Do you think you should expect your little child to obey you always?

A little child 2 or 3 years old will not always obey you.
You must not expect him to.

He does not always understand what you expect of him.
He is not old enough to know why he should obey you.

He will learn as he grows.

Do not nag him about little things that do not matter very much.

Always ask for obedience from a very small child in important things.

Such things are:

Going to bed and getting up at a certain time.

Going to the toilet regularly.

Picking up his toys.

Eating his meals regularly.

Never playing in the street or crossing it without you.

You must decide what the most important things are.

See that your child knows what things you think are important.

Then always be consistent in asking for obedience. Being consistent means doing the same thing in the same way every time.

Then your child will learn to obey in little things too.

Perhaps sometimes your child does not obey you. Have you ever tried to think why he does not?

1. *Often he does not hear you at all when he is playing hard.*

Be sure he is listening before you tell him what to do.

Be sure he has heard you before you punish him for not obeying.

2. *Perhaps you tell him to do something. Then you are not careful to see that he has done it. You forget about it. He soon learns that he does not need to do what you say because you often forget.*

3. *Perhaps he acts cross and ugly because he is sleepy and tired.*

Did he get his afternoon nap?

Does he go to bed at the same time every day?

Children must have much sleep if they are to be happy and good.

4. *Do you let him do something one day and punish him for doing it the next day?*

That will make him think, "Perhaps she won't punish me this time. I'll take a chance."

You see he does not know when to believe you.

But he does know that he need not obey you all the time.

5. *Do you tell him you will give him something nice if he will obey?*

This is a bribe.

You are teaching him the habit of not obeying until he gets some pay out of it.

You are teaching him to wait for a bribe.

6. *Do you try to scare him to make him do what you want?*

This is called a threat. Then one of two things may happen:

He gets used to threats and stops minding because he knows they will not hurt him. He knows you do not do what you threaten.

Or you make him afraid of everything.

7. *Do you ever break your promises to the children?*

Do you trust people who do not keep their promises? Children are just the same.

When you do not keep your promises you teach them not to trust you.

They do not believe you.

They do not obey people they can not trust.

8. A child likes excitement very much. He often does things he knows are naughty because *it is exciting to see you get angry*. He thinks this a good reason not to obey.

9. Some things are important to parents, but children do not think they are important at all. Other things are important to children. Children do not think it is important to come to dinner when they are busy building a block house.

When you give a command to your child, try to give him some time to finish what he is doing. Warn him 5 minutes before dinner is ready or 5 minutes before bedtime has come. Then he can finish his play and pick up his toys before he must do what you want.

10. *Do you tell your child to do things he really can not do?*

A little child can not sit still very long.

He can not keep from making a noise most of the time.

TEDDY AND HIS FAIRYLAND

Little Teddy was making a fairyland in the back yard. He had found some pretty stones and some birds' feathers, and some tiny flowers and leaves. He was building the loveliest fairyland.

He was singing to himself because he was so happy. He was so busy working that he did not hear anything. He did not hear the dog bark. He did not hear the "toot-toot" of the automobiles. He did not hear his mother call him.

She thought he did. She thought he was naughty because he did not come.

She ran down into the yard and stepped right into the middle of fairyland.

She took Teddy by the arm and slapped him.

He cried very hard. He tried to tell her he really didn't hear. He tried to tell her about fairyland. But she did not understand.

She did not know that she had hurt him very much.

It was not the slap that hurt. She had broken his beautiful fairy-land.

DO YOU ALWAYS TELL THE TRUTH TO YOUR CHILD?

Think hard.

If you promise your child something, do you *always* give it to him?

Do you *always* punish him when you say you will?

Do you *always* carry out your threats? A threat is a promise that something bad will happen.

Do you tell him the policeman will take him to jail? This is a threat. You know it is not true.

Your child will soon find out that it is not true. He will not believe you any more.

If you do not always do what you say you will, your baby will soon learn that you do not mean what you say.

He will not care what you say, because he does not believe you. So, of course, he will not mind you.

There was a mother who tried very hard to keep her promises always.

If she said "No," she stuck to it.

If she said "Yes," she stuck to it.

One day she said "No" to what the child asked for, but he kept on teasing for it. They were at a party.

At last she said, "Don't you know that when mother says 'No' she never, never changes her mind?"

"Once you did," answered her little boy.

You see, he never forgot that one time she did not keep her word. He thought, "We are at a party. She doesn't want me to make trouble. She will let me have it as she did once before to make me stop teasing. I will tease till I get it again."

DOES YOUR CHILD OBEY YOU WHEN YOU SPEAK TO HIM QUIETLY?

Sometimes you tell your child to do something. He pays no attention.

You tell him again, louder. He pays no attention.

You tell him again, with your voice very loud and angry. *Then* he does it.

He knows by your voice that it is time to obey. He has learned to tell by your voice just how long he can disobey. He knows it does not matter how loud you talk when your voice is not angry. He knows he must obey quickly when your voice is angry. Something will happen to him if he does not obey then.

Do you talk loud in your home? That makes your home very noisy. Noise is bad for people, both for children and for grown-ups. It makes them nervous.

They get angry more quickly; and when they are nervous and angry they will soon be naughty.

It is good always to speak quietly. The children will listen. They will not be nervous or angry.

Some parents teach their children to obey the first time they speak. They do not speak loud. They do not speak angrily. They speak quietly, but their children have learned to obey the first time. They have learned it is better for them, because nice things happen when they mind quickly and bad things happen when they do not. Perhaps, if they obey, they may go on an errand with daddy. Perhaps mother will tell a story. Perhaps she will kiss her little child and say, "You make mother so happy." Perhaps she will say, "You may ask Tommy to come over and play."

DO YOU WANT YOUR CHILDREN ALWAYS TO WAIT FOR YOU TO TELL THEM WHAT TO DO?

Some children never do anything by themselves. They never think for themselves. They have to wait until somebody tells them what to do. They can not plan their own play and games.

When they grow big they do not know how to be independent. They get into trouble because they do whatever people tell them. They do not know how to think for themselves.

You must teach your children to think for themselves what is the right thing to do. They must learn to plan their own play and work. Even if their plan does not seem best to you, let them work it out themselves. Praise them for trying all alone.

Three-year-old Jimmy was very happy. He was giving his mother a surprise. He was washing the dishes for her while she was making the beds.

He thought how happy she would be. She would say, "Such a big boy!" and hug him.

Suddenly a big cup fell out of his little hand. Crash! Bang! Mother came rushing in.

She did not stop to think that her baby was trying to help. She spanked him because he had broken a cup.

After that he was afraid to help. He was afraid to do anything unless his mother had told him to do it. She always got angry if he tried to do anything alone.

When he went to school, he always did what people told him. He did what the boys told him.

There were bad boys around. They told him to do bad things. He was afraid not to do them.

Everyone thought he was a bad boy.

He was obeying, but he did not think for himself whether he was doing the right thing. He did what *anybody* told him.

One day some boys told him to help them steal some money from a store.

He did not want to steal, but he thought he must do as he was told. The boys made him go into the store and take the money while they stayed in a safe place.

Are you teaching your child to think for himself?

PROBLEMS

1. Your little boy enjoys reading very much. He is busy reading his book when you tell him dinner is ready. He does not hear you. What do you do or say?
2. You have taken your child to see a movie or hear a concert that he can not understand. You ask him again and again to be quiet and sit still. Why does he disobey you?
3. You may need to have your little girl help you with the baby when you are very busy. The other little girls are calling for her to play with them. How do you make her feel happy about helping with the baby? What would you do if she disobeyed you and went out to play instead of helping?
4. What do you promise your child when he is good? When he is naughty? Do you always see that he gets these things?
5. Do you expect your child to obey you?
6. Do you ever say to his father before him that you can not make him obey you?
7. Do you delay punishment until his father comes home? Why is this not a good thing to do? Do you think your child will ever learn to obey you if he knows that you think you can not manage him?
8. Do you let your child try to do things all alone?

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Lesson No. 5.—HOW PARENTS TEACH THEIR CHILDREN TO BE NAUGHTY

Is your child naughty? Is he selfish? Does he show off? Perhaps you have made him like this.

Are you nicer to one child than to another?

Do you try to make children do things that are not important just to show that you are the boss? Children do not want to mind then. They feel just as grown-up people feel.

Do you laugh at your child sometimes when he is naughty and sometimes when he is good? How will he know which thing to do to please you?

Do you punish the children when you are angry? That makes them angry, too. They will do still naughtier things.

Do you punish too hard? If you do, the children will lie so as to get out of being punished.

Do you leave things around that children want to have? You make it easy, then, for the children to take them. You make it easy for them to do wrong.

Do you always speak and act the truth? If a friend calls up and asks you to go to the movies, and your boy is answering the telephone, do you say to him, "I don't want to go. Tell her I have a headache"? Perhaps the next morning your boy will "have a headache" when it is time to go to school.

Does your child whine and cry when it is time to go to bed? Perhaps you have been putting him to bed in the daytime to punish him. Perhaps you have let him stay up late some night to see visitors or to go with you to a movie. He does not want to go to bed because he thinks he will miss some fun.

Are you letting your little child grow up and begin to be independent of you. Or are you trying to keep him a baby?

Children want to do things for themselves. If you will not let your child try, he may kick and scream. Then you are making him naughty.

Some parents do not stop to think that their little one is trying to help. They only see a broken cup or something spilled on the floor. Then they scold the child and make him stop helping. He learns it is safer for him not to help. When you want him to help later he will not do it. You will find that he is selfish and lazy. Who made him selfish and lazy?

TALKING ABOUT YOUR CHILDREN

Do you talk about your child before him?

Most parents do.

They think the child is not paying attention. They think he is too little to understand. Many times they do not think at all.

But children *do* pay attention and they *do* understand—even very little children—even babies.

Your Johnny is 3 years old. Perhaps he heard you say, "No, I can't go so early, because Johnny cries and won't go to sleep unless I sit with him." Then he will think, "She says I can make her stay with me. I will always cry when she starts to go out. Then I can make her stay with me all the time."

You have taught him this because you said before him that you had to obey him when he cried.

Another day at breakfast you say, "Father, can *you* make Johnny eat his cereal? *I* can't."

Johnny has two ears. He hears every word you say.

He is a smart little boy. He knows what you mean.

He says to himself, "Mother says she can't make me eat my cereal. I don't have to mind. I can just say, 'I won't.'"

Johnny goes with you to the well-baby clinic. He hears you say to the nurse, "He doesn't like vegetables. I can't make him eat them."

He is with you when you go to the doctor's, and he hears you say, "I can't make him take that medicine."

Do you expect Johnny to obey you after he has heard you say all these things? You have told people again and again that you can not make him obey. He has heard you. So he believes you can not make him obey.

Of course he will disobey you. You have taught him to.

Are you going to go on talking before him?

You have a younger child, only 2 years old. Do you talk before her, too?

Children 2 years old can not understand your words always, but they can understand your voice and your face. They know when you are talking about them. They know when you expect them to obey and when you expect them to disobey. They can tell from your voice.

Sometimes you tell some one about a smart thing your child has done.

He hears you, of course. He thinks, "I'm a smart boy! My mother says so!"

After that every time he says something he looks around to see if you are paying attention. He wants you to talk about him some more. He thinks everything he does is smart.

Is that the kind of child you want him to be?

Of course you want to tell your husband and your friends the funny things he says. But wait until he is out playing or in bed. Then he will not hear you talking about him.

SOMETHING FOR FATHERS TO THINK ABOUT

Does your child say to you sometimes, "Mother says I can't go, but I can, can't I? You tell her I can"?

What do you say?

Do you say, "Let him go. It's all right"?

Or do you say, "If your mother said 'No,' it's 'No.' What she says, I say"?

Which do you think is better for the child?

Suppose you said, "Yes, you may go." Does that teach the child to obey his mother? Does that teach him to respect her?

Does not that make him think, "It does not matter what mother says; I do not have to obey her"?

If you think mother has made a mistake, or if she thinks you have made a mistake, talk about it together where the child will not hear you.

If you talk about the children before them and if you do not agree, they will learn to disobey one of you. You do not want that.

WHAT FATHER TAUGHT SALLY

It was supper time. Mr. and Mrs. Green and little Sally were sitting at the table.

Sally was only 4 years old, so she had some custard for her dessert. Her father and mother had pie.

Sally saw the pie and began to cry. "I don't like my supper. I want some pie. I won't eat my supper!"

Her father said, "Here, I'll give you some of my pie."

"No," said Mrs. Green, "pie is not good for children. She must learn not to cry for things."

But Mr. Green did not listen. "I told her I would give her some of my pie. Here is some. Now stop crying."

Mrs. Green tried to stop him. "No, no. She must not have pie. The doctor says it is not good for her."

Mr. Green got angry. "A little pie can't hurt her. She is my child. I had pie when I was a child," and he put the pie on Sally's plate.

Sally had been listening to every word. She thought, "Now I know how to get things. If mother says no, I'll wait until father comes home. Then I will cry. He will give it to me when I cry hard."

PROBLEMS

1. Do you and your husband ever amuse yourselves or your friends by teasing your child? What do you think would be the result? Will it make your child happy and friendly; or will it make him sullen and cross?
2. What do you do if your child "shows off" before your company? Do you punish him in front of the company or do you take him to his own room and pay no attention to him? Which is better?
3. Father comes home and brings Johnny a nice candy toy. Mother has promised to punish Johnny by not letting him have candy for a week. What do father and mother say? Where do they say it?
4. If you always give your children what they want when they cry for it, your love is selfish, isn't it? Can you think of any other kinds of selfish love?
5. When should you pay most attention to your child? When he is good or when he is naughty? Why should you not talk about your child before him?
6. When you laugh at something your child has done, what does he think?
7. How can you show that you are pleased in a better way than laughing?

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Lesson No. 6.—WHY AND HOW DO YOU PUNISH YOUR CHILD?

WHY DO YOU PUNISH YOUR CHILD?

Do you punish him because *you think* he is naughty and you want to make him good? Are you sure that he is really naughty and not just playing some game or trying to help?

Do you punish him because what he is doing annoys you and you want him to stop?

Do you punish him just to "pay him back" because he has done something naughty?

Do you punish him just because you are tired, and so get angry easily?

These are not good reasons for punishing him.

They are not fair to the child.

They do not make him good.

They do not make him want to be good.

They only teach him to keep out of your way when you are tired or angry.

There is only one good reason to punish a child. That is to make him understand that he must not do the naughty thing again.

But before you punish you must be sure that what he is doing is *really* naughty. It is not naughty for a child to be noisy. It is not naughty for him to want to move about. It is not naughty for him to want to get hold of things.

Children need to move and make a noise. They need to hold things in their hands to find out about them.

Of course they do not need to be *too* noisy. They do not need to be rough. You must stop them if they do these things too much, but you must be very sure they *are* too much before you stop them.

Do you punish your child again and again for doing the same naughty thing? Do you have to punish your child often for different things? If so, *he is probably being naughty just to attract your attention.* If you will give him attention when he is good and pay no attention to him when he is naughty, he will stop being naughty to get attention.

Do you punish him when he is fretful because he is sleepy?
Perhaps he has not been going to bed early enough; or perhaps he does not sleep in the afternoons.

Many times children are punished because their mothers are tired and cross. Is that fair?

When people are tired, little things make them cross. The baby plays with the kitchen pans one day, and his mother is glad. She says, "What a good baby! He plays all alone so nicely!"

Next day mother has done much washing and is very tired. Baby is playing with the pans again; the noise makes her cross. Perhaps she takes the pans away; or perhaps she slaps the baby.

Is that fair? The baby was doing the same to-day as he was yesterday, when mother said he was good. He was not banging the pans too much.

Did that mother punish because the baby was naughty or because she herself was tired and nervous?

A mother should take time for some rest each day. Then she will not be tired and nervous. Then she will not punish the baby so much.

A mother was whipping her boy very hard. A friend said to her, "Does it do him any good to whip him so hard?"

The mother answered, "Maybe it doesn't do *him* any good, but it does *me* lots of good."

Is that the way we ought to think about punishment? •

Children understand that they must be punished when they are naughty. They know when a punishment is fair.

They know it is fair to have to play alone if they have been teasing the other children.

They know it is fair not to have a new toy when they have been careless with the old one and broken it.

They know it is fair not to be given dessert or candy when they have not eaten their vegetables.

They know it is fair not to be allowed to go to town with mother if they have not stopped playing in time to get ready.

They do not like these punishments, of course, but they do know that they are fair.

HOW DO YOU PUNISH YOUR CHILD?

Some punishments are better than others.

Do you spank your child?
Do you scold and scream at him?
Do you shut him in the closet?
Do you keep him from outdoor play?

—or—

Do you put him in his room all by himself and shut the door?

Do you send him to bed if he is tired?
Do you pay no attention to him?
Do you refuse to let him have some pleasure or treat?

A wise mother does not need to spank or slap her child very often. She does not shut her child in the closet. She does not scold or scream at him. She does not keep him from outdoor play.

She knows better ways than that.

Perhaps her Johnny has been hurting the children he plays with. Then he can not play with them until he is ready to play nicely. If he forgets and hurts them again, he has to play alone some more.

Johnny's mother will do this again and again until he learns he must not hurt the children he plays with. He will learn this after a while because, of course, he wants to play with them. Children do not like to be alone.

Perhaps Johnny has not come straight home from school; or perhaps he does not come in when mother calls him. When he does come, she says, "You did not come in on time, so you can not have any dessert to-night."

She does not say, "To-morrow you can not go out to play," because she knows Johnny needs to play out in the fresh air. It would be bad for him to go without play, and it would be bad for him to go without fresh air. It will not be bad for him to go without dessert.

Sometimes children do naughty things because they are tired. A tired child is like a sick child. He needs to go to bed. Then he can rest and be quiet. He will not be naughty when he is rested.

A baby who cries because he is hungry is not naughty. He stops crying when he is fed. It is just the same with a tired child.

Some children are naughty just to get attention. The best punishment for them is not to pay attention to them. That is the way to punish temper tantrums and fussiness about food.

The best way of all is to keep your child from needing to be punished.

You can do this if you start right when your child is a baby.

Pay attention to him when he is good. Do not wait until he is naughty.

Always do what you promise.

Speak and act the truth to your child.

Do not threaten even a baby with punishments that can not be carried out.

Always be consistent in treatment of a child. Do not laugh at or praise him for something to-day and scold or punish for the same thing to-morrow.

Be sure your child is really naughty before you punish him.

Do not expect him to sit still or be quiet all the time. Let him have plenty of outdoor play where he can run and jump and climb.

If you need to punish him, the best way is to take some pleasure or treat away from him, or to leave him in a room by himself and pay no attention to him. He should understand that he must not do the naughty thing again. Do not laugh at him when he is naughty.

Keep your child so busy with interesting things to do that he will not have time to be naughty.

If you do not like what the child is doing, give him something else to do. Do not scold him. The things in your house are the most interesting toys your baby has. He wants to find out all about them. Let him have the things he can not break. Put away the things he should not have so that he will not see them. Then he will not ask for them, and you will not have to say no.

PROBLEMS

1. You take your little boy to visit one of your friends. He talks too much. He breaks a dish. Do you punish him? When? Why? How? Whose fault was it that the dish was broken?
2. If you do not punish him, what do you do to get him to act nicely?
3. Name the things you do to punish your children. What punishment do you use for each kind of naughtiness?

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Lesson No. 7.—WHAT SUGGESTION CAN DO

Did anyone ever say to you, "Aren't you feeling well? You look tired?"

Then you felt tired, didn't you?

The question put it into your mind. It *suggested* to you that you were tired.

Sometimes you get excited.

Sometimes you get frightened. Then the baby gets excited and frightened too.

Babies know when you are excited or frightened. They hear it when you speak. They feel it when you hold them.

So you must always keep quiet and cool. Then the baby will be quiet and happy.

Do you say to your child, "Go and have a good time"? You are putting the happy thought of a good time into his mind.

Do you say to him, "Don't run and play too hard. You will get excited and stay awake to-night"? You are suggesting to him not to go to sleep.

Many things get into our minds in that way.

Good ways to think and bad ways to think can be put into our minds.

Mothers and fathers must be careful to suggest to their children only good ways of thinking.

Do you say in front of your child, "Johnny looks tired. I think he must have a headache"?

Do you ask your child, "Do you feel tired? Have you a headache?"

He will see that you are worrying about his health. He will worry himself, and that will make him worse.

You can help to make your child sickly or nervous. Do not talk about the sickness or nervousness of anyone before him.

If you think your child is really tired or has a headache, put him to bed. Tell him why. Say, "You are acting like a tired child so you must take a nap and rest."

If he is really tired or sick, he will probably go to sleep. Keep the other children away from him. When he wakes, let him amuse himself quietly. Perhaps he is making believe he is sick or tired so he can get attention.

If he is not tired or sick, he will not want to stay in bed and amuse himself. It is no fun to be in bed in the daytime. He will not try that trick again.

You can help to make your child strong and healthy. Suggest strength and health to him when you talk to him and when you talk before him.

POOR HARRY

Harry came to play in Dick's yard while his mother went to town. Dick said, "Let's play horse."

Harry said, "My mother says I get a headache when I run."

"Then's let's make mud pies," said Dick.

"I mustn't get dirty. My mother says dirt is germs and germs make you sick," answered poor Harry.

"Let's build a store with those big boxes," said Dick.

"All right," said Harry, and they played happily until Harry's mother came for him.

As soon as she saw him she said, "Oh, darling, you have been playing too hard. How do you feel?"

Harry forgot about the good time he had had.

"I have a pain right here," and he put his hand on his stomach.

His mother shook her head. "He is *such* a nervous child," she said to Dick's mother; "his stomach gets upset every time he plays hard. Come home, darling, and get rested."

Harry's mother put it into his mind that he had a pain; she suggested the pain to him when he really wasn't sick.

After Harry went home, Dick's mother said, "I am glad that all the boys and girls in our family are well and strong, Dick, so you can all run and jump and play hard. Come and have your dinner now. You must be hungry after your morning's play outdoors. After your nap you can go out again."

You can make good suggestions.

You can say, "My baby eats his cereal very well."

The baby will know that you are pleased.

He will watch your face. He will listen to your voice. He will eat more.

You can say, "Johnny is learning to eat vegetables just like his big brother," or "Annie is getting to be a big girl because she has learned to put on her own shoes." Johnny will try even harder to eat everything. Annie will try to button her clothes herself. They know that you like them to try.

You can say when you weigh Johnny at the clinic, "Johnny is getting to be such a big, strong boy. He drinks his milk and eats his food just as his father does." Johnny will like to be like his father. He will do what he sees his father do.

You can make good suggestions also by what you do. Little children like to copy you and try to do just what "grown-ups" do.

If you like and eat vegetables and cereal every day, your children will copy you.

If you are happy and sing at your work, your children will be happy and try to sing at their play.

PROBLEMS

1. If your child tells you when he awakens that his head hurts or that he is too tired to go to school, what do you do? Does what you do depend on how often he complains?

2. If some one in your family is on a special diet, how do you teach your child that he can eat everything that is put before him?

3. What do you do when your child falls on the street and comes to you crying?

4. Can you think of a good suggestion which you have made to your child to-day? Can you think of a bad one?

5. Have you ever noticed that your child listens to you when you are talking to some one else about him? What will he think of what you say?

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Lesson No. 8.—IS YOUR CHILD JEALOUS, AFRAID, OR UNTRUTHFUL?

IS YOUR CHILD JEALOUS?

Nobody likes a jealous person.

A jealous person is never happy.

He may feel lonely and helpless. He may feel angry and full of hate.

A jealous person is selfish. He is angry when others get ahead of him. He does not work well with others. He does not do his best because he thinks everyone is against him.

You can make Bobby jealous—by pretending to love the new baby better—by saying, “Why aren’t you a good boy like Sammy?”

You can keep Bobby from feeling jealous. Tell him when a new baby is coming. Tell him how he can love the baby and care for him.

Tell him how the baby will love him. Let him help you get things ready for the baby.

Praise him whenever you can.

Treat all the children alike.

TONY AND THE NEW BABY

Tony was 5 years old when the new baby came.

No one had told him about the baby.

The baby took all his mother’s time. When Tony said, “I want to go for a walk,” his mother said, “I have no time. I must bathe the baby.”

Tony was very lonely and unhappy. He wanted his mother to pay attention to him. He hated his baby brother.

When his father came home, he teased Tony. He said, “You’re not my baby any more. I have another baby now.”

Tony cried. He grew more and more jealous.

He thought, “My mother and father loved me before this baby came. I will kill the baby. Then they will love me again.”

He got the hammer and tried to hit the baby. But his mother saw him and took the hammer from him.

She saw he was jealous and she felt very sorry. She said, “Tony, of course I love you. I love you just as much as the baby. You are my big boy. You must help me take care of the baby. Then the baby will love you, too.”

Tony was happy again.

Now he loves his baby brother. He is not jealous any more.

IS YOUR CHILD AFRAID?

Do you ever scare your child by saying, "The doctor cuts the fingers off little boys who touch things"?

Do you sometimes say, "The policeman will get you if you are not quiet"?

Or do you say, "Mother will ask the ragman to take you away in his big bag"?

You are making your small boy afraid of people who are his friends.

He will also soon learn that what you say is not true. He will not trust you.

Teach him to know that the doctor always wants to make him feel better. The policeman will help him to cross the street. The ragman wants to show him his nice friendly dog.

Do you make your child afraid by saying to him, "Look out, you will fall and hurt yourself," when you see him trying to climb on a fence or a ladder?

It is better to teach your child to like to try new things. Teach him to climb up the stairs alone. Then teach him to climb down alone. Then he will not be afraid of falling, and you need not be afraid.

Do you ever let him hear you say, "Johnny is afraid of the dark just as I am," or "Johnny is afraid of dogs—he gets it from his father"? Of course, Johnny will be afraid of the dark or of dogs if you suggest to him that he is.

When your child was a little baby he was not afraid of the dark. Do not let him become afraid either by scaring him with loud noises in the dark or by suggesting that he may be afraid.

Do not use punishments which make children afraid of the dark. Punish them by keeping away something they like or by leaving them all alone in a lighted room. Children do not like to be left all alone. When they are good they can come and play in the room with you.

There are some things you *must* teach your child to be afraid of. He must learn to be afraid of getting run over. He must learn to be afraid of the hot stove. He must learn to be careful of things that can hurt him.

Try to help your child to understand the things he fears.

DOES YOUR CHILD TELL YOU THE TRUTH?

Some people think that when children say something that is not exactly true, it is a lie. They think that all lies are just the same.

That is a mistake. There are different kinds of lies. One kind is the lie to get other people into trouble. The person who tells this kind of lie is cruel. He is a coward, too.

Many children tell lies that are different from this. They are not such bad lies. The children tell these lies because they do not want to be punished for something they have done. Such lies are not mean and cruel, because they are not told in order to get other people into trouble. They are told to save the children themselves.

We need not be frightened about such lies, but we must teach our children not to be afraid to tell what they have done. We must teach them that we all pay for the bad things that we do. We must show them that we are pleased if they tell the truth.

Punishment must not be so severe that children will tell lies to escape it. Whipping children, slapping them, and putting them into dark closets are the kinds of punishment that make them afraid and make them tell lies.

Sometimes children tell you they saw a fairy or a fox or something else. You know they did not see this. Some mothers get frightened and think their children are beginning to tell lies.

These are not lies. They are little stories about things the child likes to think of. Tell him that was a nice story. Tell him you like to hear his nice story, but that he can make it still nicer. He can say before he begins that he is going to tell a make-believe story. Then he can tell you any funny thing he wants.

One little girl told about some elephants she saw in the street. Her father took her hand and said, "I want to see them, too. Come, show them to me." Then she said, "You couldn't see them, daddy. They are make-believe elephants." He told her he liked make-believe elephants, too, only he liked to know which kind she was talking about. After that she always told him whether she was talking about make-believe things or about real things.

Do you always tell the truth to your child? Do you sometimes threaten punishments which you know you can not carry out? Can your child trust everything you do and say? If not, you must expect that your child will also tell or act lies.

PROBLEMS

1. When one of your children is brighter or quicker than the other, what do you do or say to keep them both happy?
2. You have planned a holiday at the seashore for your family. How do you teach your little child to like to go swimming in the ocean?
3. If an older child is afraid, how do you teach him not to be afraid? What has made him afraid?
4. Your little girl is on her way to school. She cries when a little dog runs after her to play. How do you help her not to be afraid?
5. How do you find out if your child is the one who has broken the window in the house next door? How do you punish him?
6. Your little girl tells the mother of her little friend about the beautiful dresses you wear, the big parties you give, and the new car her daddy drives. You know these things are not quite true. How do you make her understand the difference between telling the neighbors what she wishes her mother had done and what you really did do?

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Lesson No. 9.—DOES YOUR CHILD HAVE BAD PHYSICAL HABITS?

BED WETTING

Three mothers were talking together about their children.

Mrs. White said, "My little girl wets her bed every night. I do not know how to stop it."

Mrs. Smith said, "I can tell you. My little boy used to wet his bed. He was 3 years old. Every night he wet his bed. Every day I had to dry the mattress. Every day I had to wash the sheets.

"My house never looked nice, because I could not make up the bed until very late. . . .

"I was ashamed.

"Then I took my little boy to the clinic. The doctor said that he was not sick. He said, 'A child 3 years old is too big to wet his bed.' He told me what to do.

"First, I must not let him drink anything after 5 o'clock in the afternoon.

"Second, he must go to the toilet before going to bed. He must go to bed at 7 o'clock.

"Third, before I go to bed at 10 o'clock I must wake him up. I must make sure he is awake. Then I must put him on the toilet.

"I did this every night.

"In the morning his bed was always dry.

"No matter how tired or how busy I was, I always did this. Now he has formed the habit of a dry bed."

Mrs. Jones said, "That is what the doctor told me, too. Now my children never wet the bed any more. I do not let them drink anything after 5 o'clock. I put them on the toilet before they go to bed. I put them to bed early. Then I wake them when I am ready to go to bed, and I put them on the toilet again. I have no bad-smelling sheets to wash in the morning. I can make the beds early."

Mrs. White said, "I shall start to do all that to-night."

The next time she saw her friends she said, "My little girl has stopped that bad habit. Thank you for telling me what to do."

Do not scold your child because he wets the bed. This will only make him worse. Praise him when he has kept his bed dry.

Be sure that you help him by always waking him when you go to bed and taking him to the toilet. If he is big enough, let him go to the toilet alone after you have waked him. He will learn to have dry nights instead of wet nights.

THUMB SUCKING

Does your child suck his thumb or his fingers?

Tiny babies do this because they like to suck anything that goes into their mouths. Soon it becomes a habit. Some babies start the habit when they are teething.

The best way to break the habit is this: Give the baby a toy to hold that he can suck or bite on—a hard ring or rattle, or a spoon if he is not too little. It must be clean, of course. In this way a little baby will forget his fingers for a while. Next time he will forget them longer. Keep on. Do not scold. Keep him busy with interesting toys. Baby will forget about his thumb when he has toys in his hands.

Have interesting toys and games for older children. Toys and games that make them use both hands are best.

If your child has this habit, let him hold a toy while he goes to sleep. Give him a different toy every night. Then he will not ask to hold a certain toy. It is best for him to go to sleep with nothing to hold, but perhaps a toy to take to bed will help him to forget his fingers.

NAIL BITING

Nail biting comes when children are a little older. Break up that habit in the same way.

Do not scold. Give the child interesting things to do. Praise him when he tries and does well. Keep *your* nails clean and smoothly cut. Let him see that you take good care of them. Clean and file and polish every one of his nails that he does not bite. Five-year-old children like this. Tell him how pretty those fingers look. Give him a nail file for his very own so that he can help when he does not bite his nails any more. Show him that you can not make the nails that he bites look nice.

Do not worry about thumb sucking and nail biting. Perhaps your child keeps biting his nails so that you will pay attention to him.

PROBLEMS

1. Do you know anything else to do to break your child of the habit of wetting the bed?
2. How would you get your child to help you in breaking this habit?
3. Have you ever tried to find out why your child bites his nails or sucks his fingers? Is he bashful? Is he nervous? Is he hungry? Is he sleepy? Is there some other reason?
4. How can you get him to help you break him of this habit?

DOES YOUR CHILD HANDLE HIS OR HER SEX ORGANS?

Parents worry sometimes because they see their child handling or rubbing their sex organs.

Do not be upset if you see this. It is *not true* that this habit makes children "crazy."

Instead, say to yourself, "This is a habit I must break. I must not scold. I must make him forget about it. I will let him play till he is so tired he will go to sleep right away. If he wakes too early to get up, I will have toys on his bed for him to play with. I will never let him lie in bed with nothing to do."

If a boy is placed on his right side when he is put into bed he is less likely to practice this habit.

Giving him a toy to hold may help him to forget this habit just as it helps a baby to forget about sucking his thumb. Do not give him the same toy every night or he will think he can not go to sleep unless he holds a certain one. After he forgets about handling his sex organs, it is best for him to go to sleep quietly with nothing to hold.

Keep him busy and happy through the day. Then he will forget this habit just as he forgot to suck his thumb.

This habit is much like thumb sucking. Little children want to find out about everything around them. They want to put their hands on things, because they learn much through their fingers.

You know how little babies grab their toes and play with them. They do the same with their hands. Sometimes a baby, feeling over his body, gets a pleasant feeling. Then he will try to get that feeling again.

It does not matter whether the pleasant feeling comes from having his fingers in his mouth or from touching any other part of his body. It is natural for him to want to do it again.

Sometimes children get a pleasant feeling by squeezing their thighs together, or by straddling stair rails or arms of chairs. They learn this by accident, and they may try it again.

Do not get excited about these things. Keep the child's body clean. See that his clothes are not too tight.

Stop these habits by giving your child other pleasant things to do. He will forget the bad habits.

If he keeps on doing these things after you have tried to make him forget, ask the doctor to examine him. Perhaps there is something not quite right with the child's body. The doctor will make it right. Then you will be able to break the habit.

HAVE YOU EVER USED A STAR CHART?

A star chart helps a child to form a good habit and to break a bad one.

Get a blue or a red pencil or some tiny gold stars.

Rule a paper like this—

I KEPT MY BED DRY—

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

Show the paper and pencil and the stars to your child. Ask him if he would like to help you make a beautiful star chart.

Say, "See, here is a space for to-day, and here is one for to-morrow, and here for the next day, and next, and next. To-morrow morning when you have kept your bed dry we will put a beautiful gold star in this space. The next day when you have kept your bed dry we will put another star in this space. And every day just the same until we will have a star in every space. Then the chart will be yours to keep. If you like, we can put it up on the wall. Up in the long space on top we will write what you are going to do. 'I kept my bed dry.'"

If you can not buy gold stars, make a star with a red or a blue pencil.

But remember, give him *no star* on the days he does not keep his bed dry. And *always* give him a star when he does keep it dry, even if he has been naughty in other ways.

Does your child eat his vegetables? You can help him to form this habit by using a star chart. He can paste on a gold star every day when he eats all his vegetables. Help him to get a whole week of stars, then two weeks, then a month. He will probably eat his vegetables always after that.

Sometimes it is good to promise a special treat when the spaces are all filled. It helps, too, to show the chart to grandmother, or uncle, or some other grown-up person, at the end of each week. Four weeks is a long time to a child.

Do not be discouraged if he does not get stars *every* day at first. Talk about a week of stars at first; see if he can get a star every day for a whole week. Show him you are proud of him when he tries. When he does not get a star do not scold. Say, "I'm sorry about to-day, but I know you can get one to-morrow. Soon you will be big enough to have a whole week of stars." Then another week, and another! Soon the month will pass.

A star chart helps little children the most, but bigger children like one, too, sometimes. It helps them to *see* just what they have done. They can see they have done better this week than last week. Or they can see, by the empty spaces, that they must try harder to break the old habit, or it will beat them.

PROBLEMS

1. What is the greatest problem you have in training your child? Would a star chart help you to solve this problem?
2. How many other ways can you think of to use a star chart?

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Lesson No. 10.—ARE YOU HELPING YOUR CHILD TO GROW UP?

Have you ever stopped to think what kind of mind your child has?

Is he very bright?

Is he quick but careless?

Is he slow but careful?

Is he quick with his head but slow with his hands?

Is he slow with his head but quick with his hands?

Is he slow in every way?

You must know these things. If you do not, perhaps you will ask him to do things that he *can not* do.

A child who has a quick mind can do things when he is much younger than a child who has a slow mind.

When you ask a child to do things he can not do, he becomes discouraged and afraid. That is a bad habit to form.

Perhaps your baby is bright and always moving. Do you try to keep him quiet because he makes the house look untidy? He can learn to do things only by doing them. Is it better to have a baby whose mind is growing right or a house that is always in order?

Perhaps you let him do anything he wants, so that your house is always untidy. That is bad, too. He must learn not to break things. He must learn to put his toys away in order.

Perhaps he never finishes the things you have given him to do. Have you given him too big a job? A small child can not stay on a job as long as you can. It is good to give him several short jobs, not one long one. Try to make him understand that his job is very important.

If he is not so bright as Johnny, remember that is not his fault. Do not say, "Why can't you be like Johnny?" He will get discouraged and stop trying. Ask him to do the things he can do. Let him know you are pleased when he does them. Then he will want to do more and he will learn more. Every person learns better and does more when he thinks he is doing well. Help each child to do his best, and be proud of the best each child can do.

Children are often smart in some things and slow in others. Perhaps you have given your child good training in what he does well and poor training in what he does badly. It is just as smart for a child to dress himself alone as it is to sing a song.

Do you try to "show off" your baby? Do you try to push him ahead too fast? Children must grow bigger and smarter. They must not be *pushed* or they will grow all wrong like a crooked plant.

You are afraid your child will think he is smart and will want to "show off" because he is bright. So you tell him he is stupid. That is bad, too. He will believe you. He will stop trying to learn what you want him to know. Always praise him when he really tries. Tell him it is good and you are pleased.

Do you talk about your child's smartness or slowness before him? If he is bright, he will get conceited. If he is slow, his feelings will be hurt.

Are you helping your child to understand the things around him?

Every day a child finds out about something new. He wants to tell about it and ask questions about it. Do you say, "Go away, don't bother me," when he comes to tell you about it? Soon he will not tell you what he is thinking, nor what is happening to him. Then you will be sorry. He will be sorry, too, for he would like to talk to you about his discoveries if he thought you would understand.

If you do not know the answers to his questions, try to find them. Get his attention before you answer. Answer in words he can understand.

How can you teach your child how to use his hands and his body?

This is as important as teaching him to read and write. He can begin this long before he goes to school.

You can let him use tools. Perhaps he will dull them or break them. That is all right. He will soon learn to use them well. Of course you can do it better. But if *you* do it, how can he learn?

He can learn to balance and control his body by climbing stairs or a ladder or fence in the back yard, or by helping you to serve the dessert at dinner.

He can learn to dress himself, if you give him clothes that are easy to put on.

He can learn to wash his hands and face if you give him a box to stand on in front of the washbasin.

When he finds that something is hard to do, do not say before him, "He takes after me. I never could learn to jump," or "He takes after his father. He breaks everything he tries to fix."

When you say this you are teaching him that it is of no use to try. Probably he could do it very well after a little while if you let him try.

You can teach your child to be polite by being polite to him.

Do you remember to say "thank you" when he gives you something?

Do you interrupt him when he is talking to you? You do not like him to interrupt you.

Do you eat candy or things that he can not have when he is in the room and not offer him some? You would not do this to a grown person.

Children like to imitate the people they love. Imitate means to do just what others do. Your child will be polite to your friends if you treat him politely.

You can see that he has a chance to play with children of his own age. If he is with grown people too much he is always "the baby." If he plays always with much younger children he will get too bossy and conceited. He needs to play with children who want to do the same kind of things he does—sometimes better, sometimes not so well.

You can read to him and tell him stories. You can get him to read more to himself or to you.

You can try to make him think for himself. You can try to make him work things out for himself. He must begin this early when he is a little child. Then, when he is grown up, he will be independent. The world will not be hard for him. He can take care of himself and of other people. He will be a good citizen.

You can teach him to play by himself for an hour or two every day. Even a little baby can be taught to play by himself for a while every day. You can let a little child plan his own play and work it out by himself or with other children of his own age. You can teach him to put away his toys every night.

You can give your little child some easy household duty to do every day to "help mother," such as bringing in the paper or helping to set the table.

Each month or two give him something harder to do. Let him learn to do things by himself. Teach him to keep trying until he learns. Do not discourage him by laughing at him or by telling him he is not doing it right. Do not do it for him.

MARY AND HER MOTHER

Mary's mother took her to kindergarten when she was 4 years old. Mary could not take off her coat. Her mother did it for her. She could not hang it up. Her mother did that for her, too. She could not feed herself. She could not cut with scissors. She could not make pictures. Her mother had always done these things for her.

She came to school every day, but she did not learn. When she walked she fell down. She could not talk much. She acted like a stupid little girl.

The teacher said to her mother, "Was she a sick little baby?"

"Oh, no," said her mother, "she was always well. She was so strong she began to creep and walk too early. She got into my things and broke them. So I never let her walk. I do everything for her."

The teacher said, "Poor mother and poor little Mary! You wanted to be good to your baby, but you were bad to her. Children must be doing things all the time. They must be active. That is the way they learn. When you do not let them move about you keep them from learning. You make them act like stupid children. Will you help me try to show how bright Mary really is?"

Of course, Mary's mother said "Yes." She let Mary dress herself. She let her feed herself. She let her run and climb.

In school Mary did these things, too. Soon she was a busy little girl. She did not act stupid any more. She learned how to do new things every day.

Her mother came to the teacher and said, "I used to be happy when I could do things for Mary. I did not know I was making her seem stupid. Now I am happy when I see her *do things for herself*."

PROBLEMS

1. If your child does not learn to dress himself as young as he should, do you do it for him? How do you teach him to dress himself?

2. If your child can not run as fast as the other boys or can not win in the games he plays, do you let him play by himself always? Why?

3. Does your child try to do everything but finish nothing? How do you train him to finish what he starts and to do things well?

HAVE YOU TOLD YOUR CHILD WHERE THE NEW BABY CAME FROM?

Sex education is like any other kind of education.

When the children ask questions, tell them the best answer you know. If you do not know the answer, tell them that you do not know but that you will try to find out.

It does not matter what they ask. If they ask where money comes from, tell them. If they ask where eggs come from, tell them. *If they ask where babies come from, tell them.* Tell them in the same way you told about the eggs and the money.

It is good for children to know they can ask their fathers and mothers anything and get truthful answers.

It is bad for them to hear wrong answers. If they ask boys and girls, they will nearly always get wrong answers. Wrong answers mix them up and make them afraid to talk to you about what they want to know.

Do not tell your child that the stork brought the new baby or that the doctor brought him in his bag. He will not understand this. Or perhaps he will not believe it. And he will only find out later that you have lied to him. Tell him the truth now.

If there is to be a new baby in the family, tell your child before the baby comes that he is going to have a baby brother or a baby sister. Tell him that the baby grows in mother's body, that it starts as a tiny egg or cell which is so very small that it must stay inside mother for a long, long time. The baby lives inside of mother for nine months. Mother keeps the baby warm inside her body until it is big enough to live in the outside world.

If your child asks how the baby gets out into the world, tell him that when it grows big enough it will come out into the world through a little passage in mother's body. The doctor will help the baby come out.

If later he asks how the little baby was put into mother's body, or why father doesn't have babies, tell him again that the baby grew from a very tiny round egg or cell which was in mother's body, but it would not grow until father also placed a tiny cell there. The baby comes from two cells, one from father and one from mother, but the baby always grows inside mother's body.

You can show your child the seeds hidden in an apple. Tell him that these seeds grew from two tiny cells, one from the mother apple blossom and one from the father apple blossom. The seeds grew in the mother blossom and the apple grows around the seeds to protect them until they are grown. Show your child how a seed is planted in the ground. It must grow there until it is big enough to come up into the light. Then the plant grows bigger and bigger. Let your child watch the flowers grow.

Tell your child about little babies the first time he asks you. Do not make him ask other people. It is best to answer his question as soon as he asks it. Do not put it off because you think he is too little to understand. Do not let him think you do not want to answer his question about babies.

He may forget what you tell him and ask the same question again later. No matter, answer it again just as you did before. Each time he asks questions he will learn a little more.

Always answer what he asks, so that he will come to you with the next question and not go to some one else.

If you answer his questions truthfully in a quiet easy manner, he will not think much about this subject.

You do not need to tell a little child more than he asks. He will ask more when he wants to know more.

If he asks at a time when you can not talk to him, tell him to wait until a little later, when you will have more time to talk to him.

Be sure to keep this promise. It is important. All promises are important.

If your child has not begun to ask questions about babies by the time he is 6 years old, it is wise to encourage him to ask by showing him how flowers are fertilized with pollen and how the seeds grow in the ovary of the mother flower, after the pollen has stuck to the pistil. You can encourage him to ask questions about insects and animals, and soon he will ask where babies come from.

Tell your child that there are some things that are not talked about with everyone, only with father and mother. He will talk about where babies come from only with mother and father if you always answer his questions as soon as he asks them.

RUTH WANTED A BABY BROTHER

Ruth was 5 years old. The little girl next door had a new baby brother. Ruth wanted one too.

She asked her mother to tell her how to get one.

"Mother will tell you all about it when you are older. Do not talk about it now," said her mother.

Ruth wondered why her mother did not want to talk to her. She had always answered all the other questions she had asked her.

She asked the little girl next door about the baby. She said her mother told her that the doctor brought the baby in his bag, but she knew this could not be true.

They talked it over with some other children. They all laughed and told Ruth that mothers will not talk about such things. They made her feel queer and ashamed. She was lonesome and unhappy because she wanted her mother to help her, and her mother did not answer her question.

She did not ask her mother again.

It was not good for her to think of this so much.

If her mother had answered her questions, she soon would have forgotten about the baby and thought of other things.

PROBLEMS

1. Are you expecting a new baby in your home? Are you letting your older child help you plan for the new one? How did you tell him about it?

2. How do you get your child to talk about certain things only with father and mother?

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Lesson No. 11.—DOES YOUR CHILD HAVE THE RIGHT KIND OF PLAYTHINGS?

When you give the children toys, remember that they like to do things themselves.

Give them toys that can be taken apart and put together again. Do not choose a toy that can be used in one way only, for a child will soon tire of it.

A toy that breaks soon or gets out of order easily is not a good toy.

Play is a child's job, and playthings are his tools. All workmen must have good tools or they can not do good work.

A child learns much through toys. Rattles teach a tiny baby how to hold things. Blocks, spools, clothespins, a string of buttons, and animals that can be washed are good toys for babies before they are old enough to walk. They teach them about different noises and different shapes and the different feel of things.

Balls are good toys. There are many kinds of balls, and children play with them in many ways. There are big balls and little balls, soft balls and hard balls, rubber balls, wool balls, red balls and blue balls, heavy balls and light balls, balls that bounce and balls that don't. Children like them. Even babies like to roll them on the floor. There are balloons, too. They are a kind of ball. A child learns new things from balloons. He finds he must handle them gently or they will break. He learns, too, from balloons about things that go up in the air.

Children from 1 to 5 years need blocks for toys so that they can build towers, houses, tracks, steps, boxes, pens, walls. The smallest children need small blocks. The 2 or 3 year old also needs large blocks. These can be made like boxes with the covers nailed on. They will not be so heavy as solid blocks.

A child loves dolls and animal toys because he can pretend they are alive and make games about them. It is good to buy dolls and animals that can be cleaned easily.

A child can be happy a long time on sunny days in a sand pile. He loves to dig, to make heaps, and to fill and empty boxes, pails, or some toy. A big kitchen spoon will do for a shovel and a tin cup for a pail. As he grows older, he will build towns and work out other plans in the sand with his playmates. If you have a back yard, it is a great help to build a sand box there where the little children can play alone but where you can watch them from a window.

A child will spend many happy hours cutting pictures from paper. Give him a pair of scissors with round ends and an old magazine or newspaper.

Here is something to think about. *Isn't it true that most grown people buy the kind of toys they like themselves?* Don't they say, "See this cunning monkey! He climbs a ladder when you wind him up. I'll get him for Freddy." Freddy likes an animal he can hug and pull around, but he sometimes gets one that is too big for him to hold or one that he does not understand how to play with by himself, because his grown-up friends like it. We really are selfish, aren't we, when we do this?

A child 1 to 3 years old likes to play with the things in the house. He learns much in this way. So do not have furniture in his room that is too fine for him to touch. This is the way he finds out what the different objects in the house are and how to use them. He enjoys pots and pans of different sizes, a chair to push around or a box to climb upon, boxes with covers to open and shut, a bunch of keys to rattle, doors to shut, drawers to open and close. He can learn much by playing with a wheelbarrow or a strong little wagon.

He likes to handle paper. You can teach him to turn the pages of a book carefully. He likes to look at pictures, too; so he does two things he likes when he looks at pictures in books.

He likes to scribble. Soft pencils and colored crayons are fine toys. Wrapping paper cut into squares will help him to learn where he may write so that walls and books will not be soiled.

Children from 3 to 5 years old like a smooth board to play with. They can do many things with a board. They can use it as a seesaw. They can put one end on a box or on the steps of the house and use it as a slide. They can put it across two low boxes and learn to balance themselves as they walk along it. They also like a *small ladder* to climb or to hang on. *Packing boxes* which are smooth and have no nails or splinters in them are good for the playyard or playroom.

A child 3 or 4 years old needs playmates. They teach him to get along with other children. With his playmates he enjoys swings and seesaws as well as tumbling about in games. This kind of play makes him strong.

A very small child will imitate the children he sees around him, and so learn to do the things they can do. A little later he will take an active part in the games the children are playing. If he learns to play nicely with children when he is little, he will know how to work well with other people when he is a man.

Children from 2 to 5 years old want to do what mother does—sweep, wash dishes, carry dishes, set the table, dust, make the beds. They like to play with cloth, to roll it up and fold it and put it in boxes. They want to wash and iron it like mother. Your child will be happy and quiet a long time with a bit of dough to mix and play with.

This is the time to let him form the habit of helping. It is fun for him, and he is learning good habits of thoughtfulness and of doing careful work, too. So you mothers must be very patient and not worry if the housework goes more slowly than if you were doing it alone. You are really saving time, for you are training a good, happy, busy child, who is learning to work well and to want to help you always.

Every child must learn to take care of his toys. Dirty, broken toys teach him to be careless. He must have a box to keep his toys in, or a drawer or a low shelf that he can reach easily. He must learn to put them away when he is through playing with them. He should learn to play with a few toys and to put them away before he takes out others.

Toys that are easily broken are not good for children. After they are broken, children do not like them any more, and they ask for new ones. That is not a good habit to form. It is not good to get tired of things quickly and to want something new right away.

Your child should have a corner of his own where he can work or play undisturbed when he wants to be alone. If there is only one child in your family, you should see that he also plays with other children.

PROBLEMS

1. Why is it wise to let children play in the sand boxes?
2. Why do children enjoy playing with dolls, and household articles in small sizes.
3. How does playing on swings and seesaws help children?
4. Does your child have a place of his very own to keep his toys? Does he put them away after he finishes playing? How do you teach him to do this?

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Lesson No. 12.—THE JOB OF BEING A PARENT

To be a good father or mother is one of the hardest jobs on earth. It is the finest, biggest job, too.

Some parents do not know how to do the right things for their children. They want to do the best things for them, but they make mistakes. They make it hard for their children to grow up happy and strong and good.

Here are some mistakes parents often make. Do you make them, too?

(1) *Are you so afraid the children will get hurt that you will not let them run and play and climb outdoors? You keep them from learning to be strong and independent.*

(2) *Are you so afraid they will get sick that you talk about being sick before them? Soon the children will think they are sick. They will form the habit of being sick. A child likes to have his parents worried about him. He gets attention.*

Sometimes the children will make-believe that they are sick so that you will let them stay home from school. Sometimes they will make-believe they are sick so that you will let them be lazy. Sometimes they will make-believe they are sick so that you will do what they want.

(3) *Can you tell when your child is really sick? Watch him when he is well. Notice the way he stands or walks, the color of his skin, the color of his tongue, if his skin is too hot or too cold, how much sleep he usually gets, and how active he usually is. Notice, too, the number of bowel movements he has each day, and the color and amount of his urine. Then you will know when he is really sick. Of course if he is really sick he should not go to school or go among other children.*

(4) *Do you try to give your child everything he wants, just because he asks for it?* When he is big, he will not always be with you. He will be with other people. They will not give him everything he wants just because he asks for it. Then he will think he is not treated right. He will change from one job to another. He will not be happy. He will not be successful. While he is little you must teach him he can not have everything he wants just because he asks for it.

(5) *Do you tell lies to your child to make him do what you want?* He will soon find out that the "bad man" does not come and get him. Then he will not believe anything you tell him. Then he will lie to you. You have taught him to lie.

(6) *Do you boss your child too much?* How can he learn then to think things out for himself? How can he learn to do things for himself? How can he learn to decide for himself when he is big and away from you.

You must give him a chance to learn now, while he is at the best learning age. You must let him do more and more for himself. Do not say, "Now get the knives. Now get the forks. Now get the spoons. Now get the glasses," Let him think for himself.

(7) *Do you say, "Don't" or "Stop" every time your child starts to do something?* A child who hears "Don't" or "Stop" every time he moves is like a person with his hands tied.

How can tied hands ever learn to be useful? When you do everything for your child, so that he does not learn how to do things himself, you are making him seem stupid.

(8) *Do you want to keep your child's love for yourself?* That is very selfish. It keeps the child from making friends. A good mother is happy to see her child happy, no matter where he is. She is a bad mother if she is sorry when he is happy without her.

(9) Do you "baby" and pet your child too much?

If you do everything for him and keep him like a baby, he will not grow up to be independent. Such a child is a spoiled child. You have spoiled him.

You are being selfish when you teach him that he can not eat unless you feed him, or that he can not go to sleep unless you lie down with him. You are being good to *yourself*, because you like to take care of him. But you are being bad to *him*.

ANNA AT KINDERGARTEN

Anna was 4 years old. She had never been away from her mother. When her mother brought her to kindergarten she said to the teacher, "Anna has never been away from me. I am afraid she will cry. I am afraid she will be very unhappy. She loves me so much that she wants to be with me all the time. I will come back in a little while."

She hugged and kissed Anna and said, "Don't cry, dear. Mother will come back very soon."

Of course Anna cried. Her mother had put it into her head. But after her mother had gone, she began to watch the other children. She had never seen so many children. She had never had so many interesting things to play with.

She stopped crying and began to play. When her mother came back she was laughing and happy; but when she saw her mother, she ran to her and began to cry again. Her mother thought that Anna cried because she wanted to be with her and to go home with her. Anna always cried at home when she left her.

She did not understand that Anna could be happy without her. She wanted Anna to be most happy when she was with her.

She did not want Anna to grow up and be independent and able to take care of herself.

She took Anna away from the kindergarten and did not let her go back again.

Was she a good mother?

Was she thinking about Anna or about herself?

Did she love Anna in a good way or in a selfish way?

What kind of girl do you think Anna will be when she is big?

Don't worry. Children grow up right like plants that have good earth and sun and rain, if you give them the chance. When you worry and get angry and afraid, you take away that chance. You keep them from growing right.

Common sense and kindness are never wrong. The next time you do not know what to do, try to do the thing that will be both sensible and kind. It will not be really sensible and kind unless it will help to form good habits for the children to use as they grow up.

Keep learning more and more about your job as a parent. Don't think you know it all. Nobody does. The job is too big.

We all make mistakes, but we can learn from our own mistakes. We can learn to help one another, too, by telling what we have found out about being a good parent. Many parents are forming little clubs to talk over these things.

Ask yourself these questions:

What did Johnnie do to-day that troubled me? Was I impatient with him? Why?

Did I have too little sleep last night?

Was I worried?

Did I eat food that did not agree with me?

Did something I did to Johnnie last week cause this?

Did I manage it then the right way, so it would not happen again?

What did Johnnie do that was good to-day?

Did I praise him for it so that he will want to do it again?

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IMPORTANT THINGS FOR MOTHERS AND FATHERS TO REMEMBER

In these 12 lessons we have been saying a few things over and over. They are so important we want you to be sure to remember them. Here they are again.

Tell and act the truth to your children.

Keep your promises, good or bad. Think before you threaten or promise: "Can I *really* carry out my threats or my promises?" If you can not, the children will learn that you do not tell them the truth.

Decide which things are most important for a child to do and then be consistent about seeing that he does them. Do not nag him about little things that do not matter very much.

Do not say "No" one time and "Yes" the next time for the same thing. Your child will never learn that way what is good to do and what is bad. If you have said, "Bed at 7," do not say, "Well, this one time you may stay up till 8."

The best way to break up a bad habit in a child is to keep the child so busy with interesting things to do that he forgets the old habit.

Pay no attention to him when he tries to get what he wants by temper tantrums, by whining, or by vomiting.

See that he gets things (if they are good for him) only when he is quiet and happy and polite.

Keep cool and quiet yourself. Speak in a quiet voice.

Show the child you are pleased when he tries.

Have you tried any new ways to make your child happy and good since you started reading these lessons?

Which lessons did you find most helpful?

Write to the United States Children's Bureau in Washington, D. C., if you have questions that you would like taken up in other lessons.



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